

is very large. In this it resembles the occasionally nocturnal *Orgyia antiqua* (L.): I have a few trap records of this, and I had one at light in the field at Durfold Wood, Surrey, on a very unfavourable night in October 1973.

One would like to know more about these occasional nocturnal flights of usually diurnal British species. Has anyone had *A. cordigera* (Thunb.), *A. melanopa* (Thunb.) or *Ligdia carbonaria* (Clerck) at light in the Scottish Highlands? Or *Pseudopanthera macularia* (L.) or the *Archearis* species (Orange Underwings) in England? Is there perhaps some sexual distinction, as with *Lasiocampa quercus* (L.), *Macrothylacia rubi* (L.), *Saturnia pavonia* (L.), females of which fly at night but the males only by day? Has nocturnal flight anything to do with migration, as is certainly the case with the occasional appearance of *Vanessa atalanta* (L.) at light.—R. F. Bretherton, Folly Hill, Birtley Green, Bramley, Guildford, Surrey GU5 OLE. 12.i.1974.

**HYLES GALLII ROTT. IN LINCOLNSHIRE.**—A male *Hyles gallii* Rott. was seen in Boston in daylight "fighting" (according to my informant) "a House Sparrow". It was subsequently captured. On the night of the 15th/16th August a female was taken in the static light trap at the Gibraltar Point Field Station. She was in very worn condition and on dissection I found eight imperfectly formed eggs in a grossly distended oviduct and patulous vagina. The obvious inference was that she had arrived in this country laden with eggs and had sought the first opportunity to deposit them. Indeed, when on the 6th September the first search was made, fourteen larvae were found on small shrubby plants of *Epilobium angustifolium* growing on the seaward side of the sand dunes. Seven more were found on the 8th and five more on the 9th. In all well over fifty larvae were found but a number showed a punctured wound just above the lateral line in their distal segments from which haemolymph was still flowing. These larvae were obviously dying. It was thought that these wounds were probably due to a peck by a bird, probably a Lark, abundant in the area, made in fright or surprise as a single act and not followed up as in a more deliberate attack. The distribution and the very varying size of the larvae suggested that they were the offspring of two, and more probably, three females. It has often been said that the eggs are laid commonly in pairs and, indeed, it was noticed that two larvae were frequently found near or on the same plant. No larvae were found on the very large clumps of *Epilobium* which occur at intervals along the sand dunes but this may be because such clumps are much more difficult to search effectively.

Almost all were found between 11.20 a.m. and 1 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. and 5 p.m. in warm, sunny weather, when they were feeding completely exposed or lying basking in the sun. The

site of some of these larvae was marked and when, between these times, they were looked for again, it was found that the smaller green larvae were resting along the mid-rib on the under side of a leaf, while the darker larvae had crawled either under the dead leaves at the base of the plant or among the debris and cover of marram and *Rubus caesius*. This was in contrast with the same larvae in captivity which fed at any time, in sunlight or in darkness, and which let no opportunity go by of basking in the sun.

The first of 48 larvae pupated on the 16th September and the last on the 8th October. The habit of dashing wildly round the cage for as long as two days, noted by Huggins (*Ent. Rec.*, 85: 234) was very noticeable and at first alarming for it was feared that suitable conditions for pupation had not been provided. In the event all pupated safely, the majority spinning a flimsy cocoon immediately under a layer of sphagnum overlying some peat; only the last two to pupate, a male and a female, took advantage of the full depth of peat to make a much tougher cocoon close against the wooden sides of the cage five inches below the surface.

During the month of August seven larvae were found in the city of Lincoln. Another larva was found near Woodhall on September 13th.—R. E. M. PILCHER, The Little Dover House, South Thoresby, Alford, Lincs.

SOME RECORDS OF MIGRANT LEPIDOPTERA IN WESTMORLAND IN 1973—Records appearing in the entomological journals indicate that 1973 was a good year for migrant lepidoptera in Great Britain. Here at over 600 feet above sea-level in north-west England I do not seem to be well placed as regards migrants. However, one or two records have come to my notice and seem worth publishing.

A worn male *Agrius convolvuli* (L.) was found in Kendal on 24.viii.1973 by a Mr H. Reid and brought to me for identification. As the specimen was worn I did not set it but instead marked the fore-wings with blue cellulose paint and released it. Nothing further has been heard of it—it certainly did not come to my mercury vapour light which at the time was being operated every night. A few *Udea ferrugalis* (Hübner) appeared in my trap here at Kendal Wood on 8.ix.1973, and this was the only night on which they were observed.

Records currently appearing indicate that 1973 has been a "gallii" year. I was not lucky enough to take any moths at my trap here but I had a larva of *Hyles gallii* (Rott.) brought to me which had been found in Kendal on 12.ix.1973. The larva was full-grown and obviously looking for a site for pupation. This I provided and now look forward to the emergence of the imago later this year.

Perhaps it is worth noting that during October and well into November *Autographa gamma* (L.) was extremely abundant here joining the many *Syrphids* visiting Michaelmas daisies and other flowers in the garden.—Dr NEVILLE L. BIRKETT, KENDAL WOOD, NEW HUTTON, nr. Kendal. 20.i.1974.